



**NATIONAL SURVEY
OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES**

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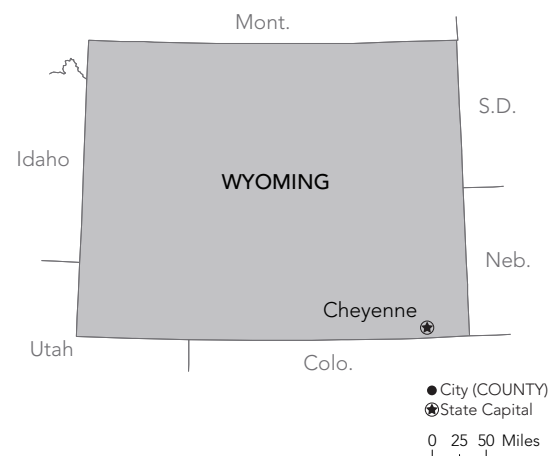
from the INSTITUTE FOR CHILDREN, POVERTY, AND HOMELESSNESS

Wyoming had an estimated 72 homeless families on a single night in 2009, with providers serving more than three times their bed capacity over the course of the year.¹ This brief summarizes some of the state's public and private initiatives to assist these families.

State Taskforce on Homelessness

Taskforce: The Wyoming Interagency Council on Homelessness (established in 2003) was never formalized by an executive order and is no longer active.

Governor's Appointee: None.



Demographic Summary and Overview of Regional Organization

	Wyoming	Cheyenne
Persons in homeless families ²	175	n/a
Number of family shelter beds ³	367	n/a
Persons in homeless families (per 10,000 population in families) ⁴	10	n/a
Percent of families in poverty ⁵	9.39%	6.90%
10-Year plan date approved or implemented	No plan	No plan
10-Year plan target population	No plan	No plan
Point-in-time count frequency	Annually	Annually
Point-in-time count managing agency	Wyoming Homeless Collaborative	Wyoming Homeless Collaborative
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) managing agency	Wyoming Homeless Collaborative	Wyoming Homeless Collaborative
Main organizing agency or Continuum of Care (CoC) lead applicant	Wyoming Community Network	Wyoming Community Network

*Corresponds to the Balance of State Continuum of Care, which comprises areas of Wyoming that are not included in a regional or local CoC.

Family Homelessness in the Cowboy State

Wyoming's 2010 point-in-time count recorded a 41% increase (up to 246) in the number of sheltered homeless persons in families. Of the estimated 728 family members accessing emergency shelter or transitional housing over the course of 2009, 51% used transitional housing, of whom 87% stayed for less than six months. Over two-fifths (43%) of families accessed shelter from a housed situation, 20% entered from a homeless situation, and 6% came from an institutional setting. Over half (56%) resided at their previous location less than three months. Two-thirds (67%) of homeless family members were white (compared with 92% of the total population), 16% were of two or more races (versus 3% of the total population), and 10% percent were American Indian or Alaska Native (compared with 2% of the total population).⁶

Supporting Homeless Families in the Magic City of the Plains

Cheyenne, the largest city in Wyoming, contained only 9.5% (35) of the state's family emergency and transitional shelter beds in 2009, with one family shelter bed

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The *National Survey of Programs and Services for Homeless Families* is an online resource for service providers, advocates, researchers, and public policy makers working in the field of family homelessness. The Web site provides a state-by-state snapshot of the interconnections between governmental and nonprofit work to end family homelessness. For additional information on Wyoming and other states, visit www.icprwb.org

available for every 2,033 family members in the county.⁷ Family Promise Cheyenne, the sole Wyoming affiliate of the national non-profit organization, has made emergency shelter and meals available to homeless families with children through a network of local host congregations since 2001. At the organization's day center, families access case management; shower and laundry facilities; and computers for job searches, resume writing, and GED completion. In 2009, Family Promise Cheyenne provided 2,099 bed nights and 4,747 hot meals. Ninety-six percent of families obtained stable employment (25 of 26) and 88.5% secured permanent housing.⁸

Wyomingites CLIMBing the Corporate Ladder

CLIMB Wyoming, a non-profit organization established in 1986, has provided employment services to 1,258 low-income or doubled-up single mothers. At six locations statewide, mothers build professional readiness through mental health counseling, life skills education (including parenting and computer classes), and employment training during a two- to four-month period. Clients gain access to higher paying career opportunities through four- to twelve-week job placements, where participating businesses are eligible for wage reimbursement and may offer permanent employment upon completion. CLIMB's graduation rate was 87% in 2010. While only 45% of mothers were employed at program entry, 80% had gained and maintained employment two-years post program. The average participant monthly income increased from \$1,059 at intake to \$2,412 two-years after program exit.⁹

Need for Homeless Services Exceeding Expectations

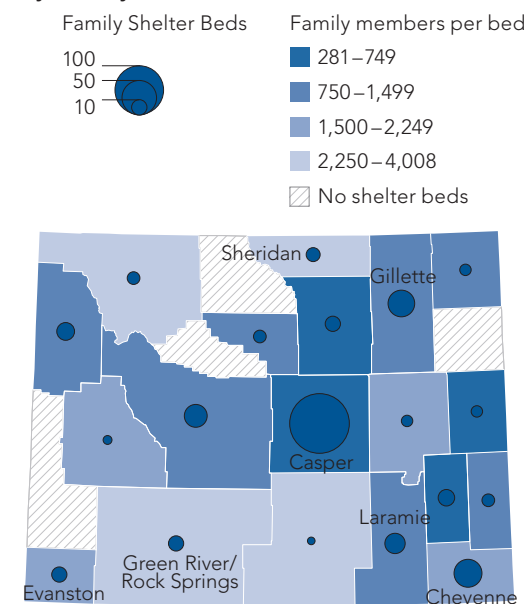
Wyoming was awarded \$1,718,313 in federal Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program monies in 2009 and expended 57.1% (\$980,816) of funds by December 2010. Initially, the state projected that a total of 1,708 services would be provided to Wyoming residents in need during the grant period, but demand had already surpassed that goal by 227.5% (3,886 additional services) in December. Temporary financial assistance towards rental and utility payments (1,571 and 955, respectively) served the greatest number of clients, followed by security and utility deposits (530) and motel and hotel vouchers (137).¹⁰

Head Start Providers Struggle to Serve Homeless Children

Between the 2002–03 and 2008–09 school years, 811 homeless families with 910 children participated in Wyoming's Early Head Start and Head Start programs. In 2008–09, 53 homeless infants and toddlers and 107 homeless children aged three to five accessed programs that build cognitive and social skills to increase future school readiness. Concurrently, their parents participated in parenting education and peer support groups.¹¹ Although homeless child enrollment has increased by 63.3% since 2002–03, many homeless children are not able to access services due to limited resources and grant stipulations which fail to recognize the need for mid-year registration for recently homeless families.¹²

A 2009 survey of nine Wyoming Head Start programs revealed a lack of effective collaboration with other agencies serving homeless families with children and substantial barriers to improved cooperation. In particular, program staff indicated that the following goals were challenging or extremely challenging: establishing an enrollment plan with publicly funded preschools that prioritizes homeless children (75%), conducting training and planning sessions on homelessness (62%), and coordinating homeless family outreach and support with local school districts (50%).¹³ The Wyoming Head Start Collaboration Office works to overcome barriers to collaboration primarily caused by the distance between jurisdictions.¹⁴

Number of Family Shelter Beds and Number of Family Members per Bed (by county)



Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD's 2009 CoC Homeless Assistance Programs—Housing Inventory Chart Report.

Endnotes

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD's 2009 CoC Homeless Assistance Programs—Homeless Populations and Subpopulations; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, AHAR Exchange Public Reports: 2009 Comprehensive Report of Sheltered Homeless Persons.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2009 Homeless Populations and Subpopulations.
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- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2009 Homeless Populations and Subpopulations; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates.
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- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2009 Housing Inventory Chart Report.
- United Way of Laramie County, Family Promise Cheyenne 2009 Year End Report; Family Promise Cheyenne, <http://www.cheyenneinterfaith.org>
- CLIMB Wyoming, 2010 Progress Report; Troy Rumpf (Communications Director, CLIMB Wyoming), interview with ICPH, January 2011.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HPRP Quarterly Performance Report Q1, 2009; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HPRP Quarterly Performance Report Q6, 2010.
- Wyoming Head Start Collaboration Office, Wyoming Head Start Program Information Report, 2002–09.
- Rick Hufnagel (Director, Wyoming Head Start State Collaboration Office), interview with ICPH, January 2011.
- Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center, Wyoming Head Start State Collaboration Office Needs Assessment: 2009 Results, August 2009.
- Rick Hufnagel (Director, Wyoming Head Start State Collaboration Office), interview with ICPH, January 2011.